No. 16

NEWS LETTER
OF
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA
June 1947

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the turbulence of the war years recedes, the Archaeological Society of North Carolina is once more in a position to carry on its customary role of stimulating and actively participating in studies of the prehistoric cultures of our State. It is probable that a good deal of digging will be done on a voluntary basis by interested amateurs. One of the great purposes which the Archaeological Society can serve, both as an established group and through every one of its constituent members, is to act as coordinator of such work and as guardian of the archaeological resources of North Carolina.

The difference between archaeological resources and those of other types is that once an archaeological site has been destroyed it cannot be recovered. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance, if we are to complete the scientific record of prehistoric happenings in our region, that each of us exercise his influence to prevent a wanton destruction of sites and collections, and to discourage put-holing by irresponsible persons. I suggest that whenever a site of apparent importance is discovered, or whenever any of us discovers the existence of a collection, that this be reported to one of the officers of the Society. Dr. Rights, our able editor, would be glad to maintain a card index of sites and collections at his headquarters in Winston-Salem. In this way coordinated plans for excavations could be projected, and a centralized distribution of information could be established.

Yours sincerely,

John Gillin, President.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA - SIR WALTER HOTEL, RALEIGH, DECEMBER 5, 1946.

The fourteenth annual meeting of the Archaeological Society of North Carolina was held in the Manteo Room of the Sir Walter Hotel, Raleigh, December 5, 1946, at 3: p.m. The meeting was called to order by the President, Mrs. J. B. Derieux, who appointed a nominating committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Frank Meacham.

The minutes of the 1945 meeting and the treasurer's report for the year ending November 30, 1946, were presented in mimeographed form to the members present and were approved without correction. Mr. Meacham reported for the nominating committee. Its report was accepted, there were no other nominations, and the secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for the following:

President, John Gillen, Chapel Hill
Vice-President, H. M. Doerschuk, Badin
Secretary-Treasurer, Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill
Editor, Dr. Douglas Rights, Winston-Salem
Members of the Executive Board for terms expiring in 1949
J. M. Cutliff, Raleigh
Dr. C. Sylvester Green, Durham
Dr. W. F. Stinespring, Durham

Mr. H. G. Omwake brought greetings from the Delaware society and told also of his explorations with a group from Salisbury of a burial site in that neighborhood. Mr. Omwake, son of a former president of Catawba College, is spending the year at Duke University.

The address of the afternoon was delivered by Prof. T. N. M. Lewis of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn., on the subject "In the Beginning." Touching on the explorations and discoveries made in the Tennessee Valley area before the river bottoms were flooded, Professor Lewis indicated that the history of man on this continent might be pushed back some 10,000 years. He spoke of Folsom man and of the two waves of migration into this continent from Asia: longheads first and then roundheads of Mongoloid type. He reported that the longheads were not killed off but that they merged their characteristics with the newcomers.

The latter part of the meeting concerned itself with reviews of literature of the year. Dr. Douglas Rights reported on three items: the monumental Indians of the Southeastern United States by Swanton, Hiwassee Island by Lewis and Kneberg, and "The Spiro Mound in Oklahoma" by Clement. Prof. Wallace Caldwell reported the imminent publication by Duke University Press of Dr. Right's definitive book about the North Carolina Indian. Raymond Adams memtioned that one of the Humanities Lectures at Chapel Hill in the spring of 1946 had been on the problems and principles of archaeology by Prof. J. P. Harland and indicated that copies of the lecture could be purchased.

Mrs. Dorieux announced that all members were invited to the reception at the Woman's Club building after the meeting adjourned. The meeting then adjourned.

RAYMOND ADAMS

Secretary.

Wilson, Mrs. Eddie W. The Gourd in Folk Literature. "Ethnographical Series No. 3." Boston, Mass.: The Gourd Society of America, 1946. 120 pp. Illustrated. $3.00

Mrs. Wilson is a member of the Archaeological Society of North Carolina, a resident of Cary, and a person who has gone far beyond the current fad for multi-colored gourds as ornaments. Indeed, she has found such wide use of gourds and of gourd patterns that in her book she has related the plant to domestic utensils, art, medicine, architecture, magic, and of course to archaeology. It is the archaeological side of gourd lore that will interest our readers.

It is not news that American aborigines used the versatile gourd in many ways and that the early white men adopted these uses to their own needs. The botany of archaeology has been neglected. Mrs. Wilson's book is a real contribution to that subject.

DESCRIPTION OF DRILLED STONE INDIAN ARTIFACTS FROM A YADKIN RIVER SITE

By H. M. Doerschuk

On one of the former Indian occupation areas along the bank of the Yadkin River in Stanly County, North Carolina, surface finds over a period of fifteen years have yielded a number of drilled stone artifacts which are of considerable interest. In addition to these objects, the tools used in their manufacture are also found. These are the lap stone, the hammer stone, the scraper, the rubbing stone, and the stone drill.

The raw materials for these objects consist of the native veined slate and steatite in various shades of green, light blue, and gray. Some of the steatite might have been brought from a distance, the green colors possibly being brought from the mountain region. The nearest source of steatite discovered is in Randolph County and has various shades of gray colors. The slate occurs in the immediate surroundings. Some of the artifacts have been fashioned from pebbles from the river bed near by.

Particularly those objects of slate are found in the various stages of completion. A rough piece will show the outline of its final shape as it has been fashioned by the use of a hammer stone. Marks of pecking are noticeable over its surface as a result of work of the hammer stone. Such a rock fragment was laid on a lap stone for hammer shaping. Layers of skin served as a cushion between to prevent breakage. If a pebble is the source of material, peck marks will show on portions of the surface where it is hammered to change its shape to that of the finished object. Other finished pieces will have been pecked to size and shape and will have the centers for the future drilled hole slightly counterbared, thus marking the location of the drill hole. Others will have holes only partially drilled. These are usually still in the rough surface condition and not rubbed or polished. This leads one to believe that the objects were drilled after being rough shaped by the hammer stone. This was probably done because of the chance of breakage while drilling and also because the drill hole sometimes veered off from center. Thus there would still be sufficient stock remaining on the stone to allow for a symmetrically finished shape. Of course, some other pieces indicate that drilling was accomplished after the surface had been rubbed smooth.

Some pieces show where the completed and often much used stones had broken in two at the drill hole and were subsequently redrilled at a new point. This would indicate that a great value was placed on these objects. There are also broken halves of bipennate stones with a single drill hole through the side, adjacent and at right angles to the original large hole. This indicates that the two broken halves were tied together, thereby repairing the object for further use.

Objects having holes of about 1/16" to 3/16" in diameter were no doubt tied on the dress gear as decorative pendants. These holes were drilled with the regular hand-held flint drill. The hole was drilled in from both faces, thus forming a conical-shaped hole on each side of the object which met in the point with each other. Quite frequently, due to misjudgment or due to hard spots in the stone, these two holes did not meet at the same point, thereby requiring that a larger hole be redrilled.

Descriptive of such objects are the following:

1. A gray triangular steatite ornament having two drill holes in the center, spaced 1" apart and lying along the long axis. The size is $\frac{1}{2}$" thick, $4\frac{1}{2}$" long by 2" wide at one end and tapering to a rounded point at the other end. This has a very smooth finish. It had been broken into two pieces long ago, as

indicated by the broken edges having been smoothed over. Each part was found at different times but fitted perfectly together.

2. Two parts, found at different times, of a smooth breast plate or ornament made from green slate 3/16" thick. Edges were nicely rounded and smoothed. Two holes along the center axis were spaced 1 3/4". By revolving these parts about the holes as centers of axis, the full original size was found to be an oval-shaped piece 5 5/8" long by 3" wide.

3. Part of a green steatite ornament 2½" long, 1½" wide, by ¼" thick with one small hole 1" from the unbroken end. Possible original length was 4", with the second hole in the other part.

4. Four greenish gray and one brown oval pebble pendants. The lengths vary from 9/16" to 1¼" and ¼" to 5/16" in thickness. All pieces have a hole at the upper small end except one, which is only partly drilled from each side. One has cross hatched incised lines over the complete surface with cross lines closely spaced around the edge.

Objects having larger holes of from 5/16" to 9/16" in diameter were used mounted on handles or on throwing spears. Their use has not been fully determined, but it is belived that some were used for ceremonial rites somewhat similar to our present day use of the gavel at meetings, and that others were used on throwing spears or sticks. Such use was for balancing weight and also to give a greater Velocity and heavier punch on the victim at whom the missle was aimed.

These large holes were drilled for the most part by twirling reeds or sticks with sand and water fed for the grinding action. The use of reeds or other tube-like instruments is proved by the occasional partially completed drill hole in which the central core is left standing. These holes may have been occasionally enlarged after the initial drilling by the use of flint scrapers as in evidenced by the longtitudinal lines found on the sides of the hole. This enlarging seems sometimes to have left the hold out of round and as a result did not fit the handle so well. It is remarkable how true some of these large drilled holes are made, and also how perfectly symmetrical most of these bipennate stones were shaped. These bipennate stones which have the large holes fall into four general classed of shapes described as follows:

I. Double pointed pick ax or lunar-shaped class.

In this group there is one complete made from gray slate, 16 broken parts of green steatite and 6 of gray steatite.

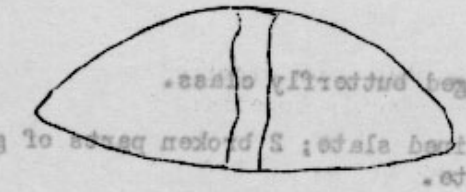
The dimensions of this class vary as follows: Length, hole to end, 1" to 3½", or 2" to 7" if unbroken; width at hole, 5/16" to ½".

II. Double bladed ax class.

One complete made of dark green steatite, 3 broken parts of green steatite, and 1 of gray steatite; 11 broken parts of greenish gray veined slate. Dimension are as follows:

Length, hole to end, 1¼" to 2", or 2¼ to 4" if unbroken; width at hole, 3/4" to 1 3/16"; height at hole, which is the same as length of hole, 1" to 1 3/4"; diameter of hole, 3/8" to 9/16".

Class I



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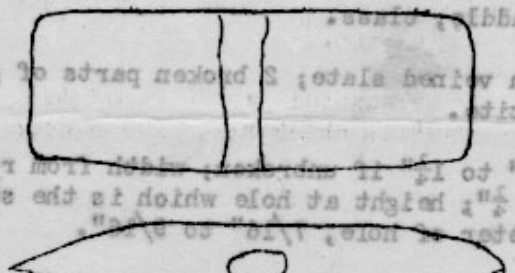

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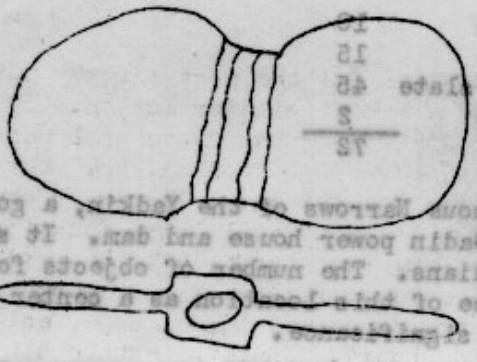

Class IV

III. Double pointed thin winged butterfly class.

3 broken parts of green veined slate; 2 broken parts of green steatite; 2 broken parts of green granite.

The dimensions of this class vary as follows: Length, hole to end, 1 3/4" to 2 3/4" to 5¼" if unbroken; width at hole, 3/4" to 1 5/16"; width at wing section 3/16" to ¼"; width at hole, which is the same as length of hole, 1 1/8" to 3"; height at wing section, 2 1/8" to 3½"; diameter of hole, 7/16" to ½".

IV. Asymmetrical, with saddle, class.

4 broken parts of green veined slate; 2 broken parts of green steatite; 2 broken parts of gray steatite.

Breadth of saddle, 3/4" to 1¼" if unbroken; width from round back to ridge of saddle hollow, 1/8" to ¼"; height at hole which is the same as length of hole, 1¼" to 2 1/8"; diameter of hole, 7/16" to 9/16".

There are also 7 small, broken fragments which are unidentified as to class but which have portions of the drilled hole in them. Of these, 5 are of the green veined slate and 2 of the green steatite.

The total number of pieces listed above are grouped in materials as follows:

Gray Steatite	10
Green "	15
Green veined slate	45
Green Granite	2
Total	72

This site is near the famous Narrows of the Yadkin, a gorge with swift rapids now the site of the Badin power house and dam. It seems to have been a favorite place for the Indians. The number of objects found at this late date indicates the importance of this location as a center of Indian occupation with perhaps religious significance.

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President Truman has signed a bill granting the Duke Power Company authority to construct a dam on Dan River near Leaksville. The area to be flooded is in the region formerly occupied by the Saura Indians.

The Federal Government is active in carrying out survey projects to try to determine the extent and nature of archaeological remains in such areas that are under government control. Since the Dan River project is a private enterprise, federal aid for survey will not be available.

Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., of the Smithsonian Institution, official in charge of government projects, writes that he hopes the Archaeological Society of N. C. and the Duke Power Company will co-operate in examining this area of the Dan River and complete necessary archaeological work before the river valley is flooded.